

[washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

## **D.C. Crackdown Called a Success**

Hundreds Arrested in Vicinity of Troubled NW Complex

By Del Quentin Wilber  
 Washington Post Staff Writer  
 Friday, April 1, 2005; Page B04

After a 14-year-old girl was slain early last year in the District's notorious Sursum Corda housing complex, D.C. police promised to root out the people who for years peddled drugs and committed violent crimes in the area.

Fourteen months later, Mayor Anthony A. Williams and other officials toured the Northwest Washington development yesterday and proclaimed the crackdown a success, saying it will become the model for a new citywide program.

Police long ago arrested a suspect in the death of Jahkema Princess Hansen, the teenager who was slain days after she apparently witnessed a homicide. They also compiled a list of nearly 70 other people suspected of crimes in the complex off North Capitol Street.

Narcotics detectives arrested 34 suspected drug dealers on the list, and officers in the police district arrested about 35 others. In addition, about 400 were arrested in the neighborhood on charges ranging from drug dealing to disorderly conduct, officials said yesterday.

Authorities said the results have been striking: Overall crime dropped 24 percent from February to December 2004 in Sursum Corda, and no homicides have occurred in the neighborhood.

Local and federal officials hope to expand the effort under Project Safe Neighborhoods, a joint program announced yesterday. Police, federal agents and probation and parole officers will target repeat offenders and gangs, officials said.

Williams (D) also said he will submit a bill to the D.C. Council that would stiffen penalties for felons caught with guns. The legislation also would increase prison terms for those who enlist youths to commit crimes and those who hurt children and the elderly.

Numerous federal and local officials joined Williams at Sursum Corda, including U.S. Attorney Kenneth L. Wainstein, who declared: "We are not just reacting. We are taking steps to shape what is happening on the streets."

The program also includes an advertising campaign that will urge people to report illegal guns. In another part of the effort, modeled after a program used in Boston several years ago, probation and parole officers are warning past offenders that they will face serious consequences if they return to criminal activity.

Authorities met in January with 44 people on parole or probation. They were told that "the next time a

body falls, we are going to take the whole group out -- from the top to the middle to the low man," said Paul A. Quander Jr., who heads the Court Services and Offender Supervision Program.

Authorities said they were drawing up similar lists of gang members and potential troublemakers for future meetings. They said the talks could help stem bloody neighborhood and gang feuds that fuel much of the city's violence.

D.C. Police Chief Charles H. Ramsey said that police have always tracked violent offenders but that lately they have been getting more support from federal agencies, prosecutors and probation officials under the new initiative.

"This is better orchestrated than before," Ramsey said.

Although some residents said the Sursum Corda neighborhood has become safer in recent months, they said the complex is still far too dangerous.

"You don't know what is coming for us when it is warmer," said Harvetta Bethea, 49, who said she was trying to move to a safer area.

© 2005 The Washington Post Company